



Glossary



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ABS, (acrylonitrile, butadiene, styrene), a tough, lightweight, highly moldable plastic compound especially suited to fitted parts and interlocking components; major uses include modular furniture, luggage, and plumbing systems.

absorption, the assimilation of sound energy by a body without recoil or echo.

accent lighting, direct lighting to emphasize a particular object or draw attention to a part of the field of view.

accent, to enhance decoration by using a lesser quantity of a contrasting color or finish.

acetate, a manufactured fiber formed of cellulose acetate, characterized by low cost, sunlight resistance, flame retardance, resistance to moths, mildew, and bacteria, low static electric potential, and low abrasion resistance.

achromatic, a neutral color, lacking in chroma or intensity: black, white, or gray.

acoustic tile, modular sound absorptive panels.

acrylic, a synthetic fiber of moderate tenacity, resistance to abrasion and light, and dimensional stability.

aesthetic, pertaining to an object's quality of beauty.

aggregate, the sum of a collection of particulars.

ambient lighting, general environmental illumination.

ampere, a unit of electric current equal to the current of one Volt acting through a resistance of one Ohm.

amplification, the effect of color intensification due to the interreflection of light from one colored surface to another. An increase in the volume of sound.

angle of incidence, the angle (measured from the surface on the side of the approach) at which an element strikes an object.

anneal, the process of strengthening through heating and gradual cooling.

ANSI, (American National Standards Institute), a private sector standards coordinating center which helps identify and coordinate private sector standards activities and standards development.

anthropometrics, the measurement of the size and proportions of the human body, and its applications to the design of furnishings, equipment, and spaces.

antimicrobial treatment, a treatment that prevents the growth of mold, mildew, and bacteria on carpet.

appurtenance, a subordinate part or accessory.

ASA, (acrylonitrile, styrene, acrylic elastomer), a plastic compound with properties similar to those of ABS.

Axminster, a patterned, woven carpet originating in the 1700s in Axminster, England in which almost all of the pile yarns appear on the surface, and are of one height.

barrier-free design, that which presents no physical barriers to access and free movement within an environment.

bay window, a window set in a frame projecting outward from a wall to create an interior recess, usually of fixed glass.

bay, a volumetric or structural unit defined by columns or walls.

berber, a carpet texture characterized by broad, short loops which give a popcorn-like appearance.

bifold door, a door with vertical double panels that folds back against itself.

binder, a substance which brings cohesion to a collection of elements.

biodegradable, capable of being broken down into innocuous products through biological processes.

blossom, the tendency of a looped yarn to untwist when cut.

board-and-batten construction, a type of wall treatment in which wide vertical boards are sealed at their junctures by narrow strips of wood, or battens.

bonded fabric, a fabric formed by combining an outer face fabric with a backing fabric using an adhesive or laminate.

bow window, a bay window in the form of an unbroken curve.

brick, a clay block hardened by heat and used as a building unit.

broadloom, floor textiles woven on looms more than about 1 meter (36 inches) wide.

brush, to add a fine texture to a surface by means of a wire or bristle brush.

bubble diagram, an initial planning sketch in which clustered circles represent activity zones placed in proximity relationships.

came, the channeled element used between pieces of glass in stained glass or leaded windows, or to divide cast-in-place terrazzo.

cantilever, any part of a structural member (commonly a beam), that projects beyond its support.

card, to combine staple fibers, such as wool or cotton into a continuous filament.

carpet, a soft-surface floor covering used to blanket a floor from wall to wall.

casegoods, furniture which is typically freestanding and capable of supporting or storing smaller materials: desks, credenzas, bookcases, files, storage cabinets, beds, dressers, and tables.

casement, a loosely woven or knit sheer drapery fabric.

casement window, a window hinged at the side, and which swings open like a door.

cathode, the terminal from which electrons emanate in a fluorescent or other discharge-type lamp.

ceramic, made from clay and heated (fired) in a kiln. A hard and durable material.

chromaticity, the aspect of a color that describes its dominant wavelength and purity

clapboard, a wood siding composed of narrow boards each with one thinner edge to facilitate horizontal overlapping.

cleft, split as with a blow.

clerestory, a window or bank of windows inserted between two roof levels to bring light into a room.

closed plan, an architectural plan that divides the internal space of a structure into separate, discrete rooms.

coefficient of utilization, (cu), the ratio of light (lumens) from a luminaire received on a workplane to that emitted by the lamp.

coffered ceiling, one with ornamental raised panels between closely spaced beams.

color fastness, the ability of a material to retain its color when exposed to light or cleaning agents.

color rendering index, the general expression for the effect of a light source on the color appearance of objects in comparison with their color appearance under a referenced light source.

color retention, the ability of a material to retain its color when exposed to light or cleaning agents.

color spectrum, the range of color comprising visible light.

compact fluorescent, an energy-saving replacement for incandescent sources, with greater efficiency and life.

concrete, a material consisting of cement mixed in varying proportions with sand and gravel or other aggregates. With the addition of water, the mixture becomes moldable, capable of assuming almost any shape. Concrete dries to a heavy, stonelike mass of great strength.

concrete blocks, large, generally hollow, bricklike blocks composed of concrete; widely used in building, especially for walls.

conduction, the direct transfer of heat through a solid material, such as glass or metal.

conduit, a tube used to protect electrical wires.

construction documents, the full volume of drawings, specifications and contracts which comprise the complete description of a built project.

contract, a legally binding, written agreement between two parties outlining services to be rendered, responsibilities, and compensation.

contract design, nonresidential interior design, including offices, institutions (healthcare, schools), hospitality, industrial facilities, and retail businesses.

convection, the transfer of heat through natural air circulation.

cotton, a natural staple fiber harvested from the flower of the cotton plant.

cove lighting, that provided by light sources shielded by a ledge and distributing light upward over the ceiling.

coved ceiling, a ceiling that curves into the supporting walls rather than meeting them at an angle.

critical path, the time frame and overlapping order of steps in the building and finishing process which determines the minimum time or necessary progression required for an event.

cut pile, a fabric or carpet, the face of which is composed of cut ends of pile yarn.

decibel, (dB, db), a unit for expressing the relative intensity of sounds on a scale from zero for the least perceptible sound to about 130 for the average pain level.

decorative design, the additional arrangement, shaping, coloring, or placing of ornament to make an object or space more beautiful or interesting to the eye.

delaminate, to come apart in layers.

density, a factor used to judge the quality of carpet; the amount of surface yarns compressed in a given area. The closer the pile tufts are to each other, and the higher and heavier the pile yarn, the more durable the carpet within the same fiber category.

design, the process of planning a building, furnishings, or composite interiors; the organization of a work of interior design, architecture or art.

design concept, the idea for the solution to a design problem.

detail drawing, a drawing, commonly full size or on a scale two or three times greater than that of the general drawings, showing specific composition of an object to be built, or part of it.

diffusion, the random dispersion or scattering of a sound or light wave when it strikes a surface that is irregular, concave, or convex in form; or when the wave form is not in line with, or not equal in size to, the object struck, the wavelength will tend to bend around the object and continue on its path.

dimensional stability, the property of a material which indicates its resistance to change in size due to affecting conditions, such as temperature or humidity.

dimmer, a device used to control the intensity of light emitted by a luminaire through the control of the voltage or current available to it.

direct glare, the result of areas of excessive contrast (such as insufficiently shielded light sources) in the direct field of view.

direct lighting, that provided on the workplane or object from a prominent and identifiable source.

double-glazing, a process of providing windows with two sheets of glass sealed together trapping air or a vacuum between them to provide superior thermal insulation.

downlight, a luminaire from which light emanates downward; may be recessed, surface or pendant mounted.

draperiy, a loosely hung, often heavy, fabric curtain.

drapery panel, a drapery length made of one or more widths of fabric that travel together on a rod.

draw curtain, a fabric panel that can be opened and closed by means of a draw cord on a traverse rod.

dropped ceiling, that portion of a ceiling below the actual functional level or below other sections of the ceiling within the same space. Often, a dropped ceiling serves to articulate specific segments of a room such as a dining area, or to accommodate mechanical equipment.

ecology, the study of the relationship between organisms and their environment.

efficacy, the measure of the effectiveness of a solution; the ratio of light emitted by a lamp to the electrical power input, usually expressed in lumens per watt.

effluent, something that flows out.

egress, a means of exiting.

elevation, a drawing which represents a vertical image of one side of an object, room or building.

emulsion, a combination of two non-compatible liquids, such as oil and water.

engineered wood product, any recombination of wood by-products to form a material of greater performance capacity than the original (see also industrial board).

ergofit, the relationship between people and their environment.

ergonomics, the science that seeks to adapt the environment to its users.

etch, to remove through corrosive action.

fabric, cloth; more specifically, a construction of fibers, not necessarily woven.

facade, the face or front of a building or article.

felting, the joining of fibers into a fabric through the application of heat, agitation and moisture, or by mechanical treatment.

fenestration, the arrangement and design of windows and other openings of a building.

fiber, a material of natural or synthetic derivation capable of forming a continuous filament, such as yarn or thread.

fiberglass, any number of plastic resins, such as polyesters, polypropylene, or nylon, reinforced with segments of glass fibers.

fiberoptics, the transmission of signals as pulses of light through an optical conductor, such as glass cord.

filament, a single continuous strand of fiber.

finish floor, the final visible flooring material or surface.

firebrick, a very hard brick capable of withstanding the intense heat of a kiln or fireplace interior.

flamed, a granite finish produced by passing a flame over the face of a piece of granite, causing it to spall off its outer surface.

flame-resistant fabric, a fabric whose fiber content or topical finish makes it difficult to ignite, slow to burn, and often self-extinguishing.

flame-retardant finish, a chemical finish that renders a fabric made of a flammable fiber resistant to fire ignition and spread.

flat slice, a method of cutting a log parallel to a plane through its center which produces a vaulted or cathedral-like grain.

flax, a plant fiber used in the manufacture of linen yarn.

flood lamp, a lamp providing a relatively wide light distribution pattern.

floor plan, a drawing that represents the horizontal arrangement of building parts and furnishings.

fluorescent lamp, a low-pressure mercury electric-discharge lamp in which a fluorescent coating (phosphor) transforms ultraviolet energy into visible light.

flux, the flow of light or the measure of the flow of electric charge in a wire.

footcandle, (fc), a unit of illuminance on a surface equal to that produced by the light of one candle at a distance of one foot.

fray, to wear by rubbing; to release from a woven fabric.

fuse, to bond together through chemical or thermal action.

galvanized iron, iron coated with zinc as a means of retarding rust.

general lighting, that which provides a substantially uniform level of illumination throughout an area, exclusive of any provision for special local requirements.

glare, any brightness or brightness relationship that annoys, distracts or reduces visibility.

glass, a mixture of silicates, alkalis, and lime that is extremely moldable when heated to high temperatures, permitting blown, molded, pressed, and stretched forms, and which cools to a rigid, nonabsorbent, transparent or translucent substance.

glass blocks, brick-like forms of glass available in a variety of shapes and sizes. They can be set together or joined to other materials with mortar.

glaze, protective and/or decorative glass-like coating formed on the surface of a ceramic piece by firing.

grazing, light directed at a very steep angle to a surface, emphasizing its texture.

hammered, a metal or stone finish produced by direct blows of a hammer on the material surface, or a finish giving the appearance thereof.

hand, the textural feel of a fabric.

hardboard, a mat-formed flat panel consisting of particles of wood bonded together with a synthetic resin or other suitable binder.

hard-wire, to permanently connect to an electrical source; as opposed to plug-in.

header, a horizontal structural member which serves to tie vertical members together at the top of an element.

holistic, emphasizing the relationship between the whole and its parts, and that the whole is greater than the mere sum of its parts.

homogeneous, of uniform make-up throughout the extent of a body.

honed, a medium to coarse stone finish produced by abrasion of a cut face.

hue, the attribute of perceived color which determines its position in the color spectrum.

hydrophobic fibers, those which resist water-borne soiling.

IESNA, (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America), the recognized technical authority for the illumination field. The society's objective is to communicate information on all aspects of good lighting practice to its members, the lighting community and consumers through a variety of programs, publications and services.

illuminance, the density of light falling upon a surface, the units of which are the lux and footcandle.

incandescent filament lamp, (bulb), a lamp in which light is produced by a filament heated to incandescence by an electric current.

incident, falling upon or striking.

indirect lighting, that provided by luminaries which distribute 90-100 percent of their emitted light first onto a reflective surface such as a ceiling or wall.

industrial board, any of a number of engineered wood products commonly used in the manufacturing of furniture and casegoods.

ingress, the way in or entrance.

insulation, the prevention, by means of certain materials, of an excessive transfer of electricity, heat, cold or sound between the inside and the outside of a structure or between portions of a structure; also, the materials themselves.

jacquard weave, a fabric of complex pattern, such as tapestry or brocade, produced on the Jacquard loom.

jalousie window, adjustable, louvered window units of narrow, glass, plastic or wood slats, most often arranged horizontally.

junction box, a protective housing for the joining of electrical connections.

Kelvin, (K), relating to the thermometric scale in which the unit of measurement equals the centigrade degree and according to which absolute zero, the temperature at which all atomic activity ceases, and the equivalent of -273.16° Celsius is 0° Kelvin.

Kelvin temperature, (K), represents the relative whiteness of a light source; whether the source appears warm, cool, or neutral. The higher the temperature, the cooler the appearance of the source. The Kelvin temperature assigned is that of a unit black body radiator heated to the same whiteness.

kilim, a hand-woven, flat, reversible tapestry rug traditionally made of wool.

lacquer, a family of fast drying resin or synthetic finishes capable of being polished to a high gloss sheen.

lamine, the process of bonding together, thin sheets or small pieces of material to create a substance having properties the material would not otherwise possess, such as strength, durability or intricate form.

lamp, a generic term for a man-made source of light.

lath, a framework of thin wood or metal ribs integral with a building skeleton for the support of tile, plaster, reinforced concrete, plastic forms, or the like.

LeCorbusier, considered by many as the father of the Modern Movement in architecture. LeCorbusier (Corbu, Corb) practiced architecture throughout Europe in the first half of the twentieth century.

letter of agreement, a legal contractual agreement between two parties that describes the obligations and responsibilities of each.

level loop, a carpet style having all tufts in a loop form and of identical height; may be woven or tufted.

life-cycle cost, the initial cost of a product (including installation) plus the cost of maintenance or operation over its useful life.

lumen, a unit of light flow equal to the light emitted into a unit solid angle by a uniform point source of one candle.

luminaire, a complete lighting unit consisting of a lamp, or lamps, together with parts designed to distribute the light, to position and protect the lamps, and to connect the lamps to the power supply; a ceiling or wall mounted light fixture, or a portable lamp.

luminance, (photometric brightness), the luminous intensity of any surface in a given direction per unit area of that surface as viewed from that direction. All things visible have some luminance. Luminance is measured in candelas per square meter (candelas per square foot, or footlamberts).

luminance ratio, an expression of the relative brightness of any two areas in the visual field.

masonry, architectural construction of stone, brick, tile, concrete block, or glass block joined together with mortar; in broader usage, construction of plaster or concrete.

mastic, originally a resin used in the production of adhesives, now commonly the generic term for flooring adhesives.

matte, a flat, non-shiny finish which thoroughly diffuses incident light.

medium density fiberboard, (MDF), a fine-grained smooth faced industrial board product, composed of wood fiber and adhesives. Easily cut, worked and finished.

medullary rays, capillary-like structures within the body of a tree that run radially from the core to the bark and their expression in quarter-sawn lumber.

metamerism, the shift in visual appearance of colors under varied illumination.

metamers, lights of the same apparent color but of different spectral energy.

microbial, relating to micro-organisms such as bacteria.

microblind, horizontal blinds with 13 mm (1/2") slats; also called micro-miniblinds.

miniblinds, horizontal blinds with 25 mm (1") slats.

modacrylic, synthetic fiber that is highly flame resistant and bulky. It has moderate resiliency, moderate dimensional stability, and high elastic recovery. It also has a low melting point and low abrasion resistance.

modular, built of unit pieces or according to standardized sets of measurements.

module, one of a series of units designed and scaled to integrate with others in different combinations to form, for example, a set of furnishings, a system of construction, or whole buildings. In current usage, the term is most often applied to mass-produced prefabricated units.

mohair, a specialty wool fiber. The most resilient of all natural fibers, strong, and possessing a good affinity for dyes.

molding, an ornamental strip of wood or plaster that protrudes from a ceiling or wall surface.

monolithic construction, a system in which the major part of a structure consists of a single, self-supporting mass, usually of reinforced concrete, plastic or fiberglass.

mortar, cement, lime or plaster combined with sand and water. When wet, the substance is moldable; it hardens to form the binding agent of masonry construction.

Munsell color system, a system of object color specification based on perceptually uniform color scaled for the three variables: hue, value and chroma.

needle-punched fabric/needle felt, a nonwoven fabric in which webs of fibers are closely entangled by the action of hundreds of barbed needles.

nonwoven fabric, a fabric which is either fibrous, but not made in a loom, or non-fibrous, made directly from a solution. See needle-punched and spunbonded fabric.

nylon, the generic term (as well as trade name) for a family of plastics exhibiting high tensile strength in fiber or sheet form. It has excellent abrasion resistance, and resiliency, retains appearance well. Fiber modifications are antistatic, anti-soil, sunlight resistant, and flame retardant.

olefin, a plastic used for fiber and container manufacturing. Advantages of olefin fibers include good abrasion resistance, tenacity, excellent resiliency, good dimensional stability, static resistant, and excellent resistance to most chemicals. It resists mildew and stains. Fiber modifications contribute to heat and light stabilization. Often referred to as polypropylene.

open plan, an architectural plan organized with few fixed partitions; provides maximum flexibility in the use of interior space.

orientation, arrangement, alignment, or position in relation to other factors or elements.

oriented strand board, an industrial board product composed of wood chips created and bound specifically to take advantage of their non-homogeneous nature to produce a product with specific structural properties.

OSHA, (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), a federal regulatory agency in the U.S. Department of Labor with responsibilities of establishing occupational safety and health standards, conducting inspections to see if standards are being observed, and initiating enforcement actions whenever an employer is not in compliance with these standards.

oxidation, a chemical process by which one material combines with oxygen to form a second (iron oxidizes to form rust).

paneling, thin, flat wooden boards or other similarly rectangular pieces of construction material joined side by side to form an interior decorative surface for walls or ceilings.

parquetry, inlay of wood that takes the form of geometric patterns; used primarily for floors and sometimes for tabletops.

particleboard, a mat-formed flat panel consisting of particles of wood bonded together with a synthetic resin or other suitable binder.

partition, a non-loadbearing subordinate wall between two piers or other supporting members.

passive solar heating system, a technique of solar heating that uses parts of the building structure to collect, store and distribute solar heat without pumps or fans.

patina, the sheen, color and texture of an object, produced by age, use, waxing, or design. On metal, patina is the film that develops from long exposure to the atmosphere.

pattern, an artistic, decorative, usually repetitive design.

perceived object color, the color perceived to belong to an object, resulting from characteristics of the object, the incident light, the surround, the viewing direction, and observer adaptation.

perspective, a system of realistic pictorial representation of objects and spaces in relative distance or depth. The optical effects perceived in viewing objects over a distance.

pile, the visible wear surface of carpet, consisting of yarn tufts in loop and/or cut configuration; also called face or nap.

pile weave, a fabric construction in which cut or uncut loops protrude from the ground cloth.

pile yarn, a yarn which forms the tuft of carpet; also called face yarn.

pill, the tendency of staple fibers to be shed from some fabrics and to form small tufts or balls on the face of the fabric.

plain slice, a method of cutting a log parallel to a plane through its center which produces a vaulted or cathedral-like grain.

plan, the configuration of spaces and rooms, walls and openings in an architectural structure; also, the graphic representation of such an arrangement.

plane, a two-dimensional expanse; a flat surface.

plaster, a paste, usually of lime, sand, and water, which hardens as it dries. Often used as a finish for interior wall and ceiling surfaces.

plastic, a malleable, ductile material. More specifically, a member of any of the several families of synthetic polymer substances.

plenum, that space between ceiling and structure where mechanical and electrical components are typically run. In some instances the plenum itself may serve as a sort of superduct for air returning to the mechanical system from the volume beneath the ceiling.

plumbing, the system of pipes which carries water and sewage within a building.

plush carpet, a smooth carpet surface texture in which individual tufts are minimally visible and the overall effect is that of a single level of fiber ends.

ply, a single thickness, layer or strand.

plywood, a composite sheet of laminated veneers, some or all of which are made of wood, with the grain of adjacent strata arranged at perpendicular angles for increased strength.

pocket door, a door that opens by sliding into a pocket.

polished, smooth and glossy.

polyester, a synthetic fiber with excellent strength, good abrasion resistance, and which resists wrinkling. Characterized by permanent body. Fiber modifications contribute to pill resistance, antistatic, and flame retardancy.

polyethylene, a group of lightweight, flexible plastics characterized by a waxy surface and resistance to chemicals and moisture but not high temperatures.

polypropylene, a family of plastics which are resistant to water-borne but not oil-borne staining.

polystyrenes, a family of rigid, transparent-to-opaque plastics that are durable, capable of accepting varied finishes, and possessed of good insulation properties.

porcelain, high-grade, translucent white ceramicware fired at extremely high temperatures; most common in fine dishes and ornaments, but having many industrial applications, such as plumbing fixtures electrical insulators, and tiles.

portable luminaire, table or floor lamp, or wall unit, which is not permanently connected to the electrical power supply.

prefabricate, to mass-produce standardized construction parts or modules for later assembly and/or combination.

primary backing, a component of tufted carpet consisting of woven or nonwoven fabric into which pile weave tufts are inserted by the tufting needles.

primer, a coating that is applied before any other finish treatment to seal the pores in or otherwise prepare a surface to be treated.

printing, as applied to textiles (fabric, carpet, etc.), the application of dyes according to a selective pattern to create a design by such methods as woodcut, silk screen, tie-dye, or injection.

problem statement, a brief statement identifying a design project according to its purpose, location and client.

programming, the research phase of design which determines the objectives and requirements of a design project.

proportion, the relation of parts to each other or to the whole in terms of magnitude, quantity, or degree.

proxemics, the study of human interaction with space and of personal and cultural spatial needs.

PVC, (polyvinyl chloride), a tough, moldable thermoplastic used in the manufacture of plumbing pipes and furniture.

quality of lighting, distribution of luminance in a visual environment with regard to visual performance, visual comfort, ease of seeing, safety and aesthetics for the specific visual tasks involved.

rag rug, a plain weave rug woven with strips of fabric, historically rags or recycled clothing remnants.

ravel, to untwist or unweave.

rayon, a natural fiber made from cellulose which has been chemically prepared. Soft hand, high moisture regain, smooth and soft fibers, good conductor of heat and static. Accepts durable press and dimensional stability finishes. Disadvantages include poor resiliency, progressive shrinkage, and weakness, especially when wet.

reflectance, the ratio of the light reflected by a surface or medium to the light incident upon it.

reflected glare, results from specular reflections of high contrast from polished or glossy surfaces in the field of view.

reflection, the process by which light or sound leaves a surface from the incident side.

refraction, the change in direction or propagation of a sound or light wave due to a change in the velocity occurring when a change in materials, a thermal gradient or a wind velocity gradient is encountered.

regain, a measure of the recovery of moisture lost to the atmosphere through drying.

reinforced concrete, concrete embedded before hardening with steel rods that lend the material a tensile strength far beyond its original capacity.

rendering, a pictorial representation of a proposed design, usual in perspective and full color.

renovate, to restore condition by rebuilding, repairing or cleaning.

restore, to renew or return to an original state or condition.

retrofit, to fit with new parts or equipment not available at the time of initial construction or production.

reverberation, a sound effect similar to that of a continuous echo.

rheostat, a device used to control the intensity of light emitted by a luminaire through control of the voltage or current available to it.

riser, the individual vertical faces of a stair. The collection of ducts or pipes which provide vertical transport of air or water through a building.

r-value, the thermal resistance of a material. A higher r-value indicates greater resistance.

rya rug, a deep shag-like rug handknotted with abstract, contemporary patterns, from Scandinavia.

sandblast, abrasive cleaning with sand moved by an air jet.

sash curtain, a semi-sheer fabric gathered or shirred onto rods at top and bottom and hung onto a window sash.

scale, dimension relative to a standard or to a familiar reference.

schedule, a table that indicates the finish material used on floors, walls, and ceilings, or lists types of doors and windows.

schematic design drawings, quick initial drawings used to generate or show ideas.

seasoning, to bring to the proper state for use, as in seasoning wood by drying.

secondary backing, a woven or nonwoven fabric reinforcement laminated to the back of tufted carpet for added strength and stability.

shade, a low-value or dark color produced by adding black to a hue. A cover for window or lamp to control light distribution.

silk, the only natural continuous filament fiber. Silk fiber is harvested from the cocoon of the silk worm. Silk fabric is highly valued for its strength, hand and luster.

simultaneous contrast, the accentuation of differences between the hue, value, and intensity of colors due to adjacent or background colors.

sisal, a natural plant fiber; smooth, straight, and yellow. May be used by itself or in blends with wool and acrylic for a softer bond. Sisal is used in wall coverings, especially in heavy-duty commercial applications because of its durability and ease of application to a variety of surfaces.

soffit, a dropped horizontal surface.

space plan, a drawing which shows the arrangement of functional elements within an area.

space planning, the functional planning of interior space; a design specialty which concentrates on establishing space needs and utilization in the early stages of design.

spall, the breaking away of a surface due to mechanical action within the material itself such as thermal expansion.

specification, the criteria of minimum durability, cost and safety requirements of finished materials; all of the information necessary for the construction of custom-made items.

specular angle, that angle between the perpendicular surface and the reflected ray. It is numerically equal to the angle of incidence.

specular reflection, that process by which incident flux is redirected without diffusion.

specular surface, shiny or glossy surface (including mirror and polished metals) from which the reflection is predominantly specular.

spunbonded, fabric manufactured by a nonwoven method in which fibers are deployed in a near-random fashion and bound by chemical or thermal means.

spunlaced, see spunbonded.

standpipe, station pipe for use by a fire department to allow connection of a pumper truck to the outside of a building for delivery of water to hose stations on the interior of the building.

stipple, to decorate by repeated touching as in dots.

structural plan, a drawing, the primary purpose of which is to show the means of supporting a thing.

substrate, the underlying or supporting layer.

surface-mounted unit, a luminaire mounted directly on the ceiling.

temper, to harden a material (metal or glass) through a specific process of heating and cooling, thereby releasing internal stresses created during the forming process.

tenacity, resistance to tearing.

tensile strength, the capacity to resist breaking or tearing apart under longitudinal stress.

terrazzo, a polished concrete flooring traditionally made of crushed marble and cement.

textile, a fiber construction; technically, a woven fabric.

texture, tactile surface quality, perceived directly through touch or indirectly through vision.

thermoplastic, a material that softens with application of heat and hardens again when cooled.

thermoset, an irreversible property of a substance that is attained by application of heat to change the chemistry of the substance, thereby making it firm.

tile, stone, concrete, or ceramic pieces, flattened and/or curved, used for roofing as well as wall, ceiling and floor covering. Also, thin modules of cork, vinyl, or other resilient material used primarily to protect and enhance interior walls, floors, and ceilings.

tip-shear carpet, a carpet texture created by shearing either level loop or high-low loop carpet lightly so that only the higher filaments within the loops are sheared.

torchere, an indirect floor lamp directing all, or nearly all, of the luminous flux upward.

track, an electrical raceway permitting the flexible use and placement of various types of luminaries along its length.

transformer, an electrical device for converting electrical potential.

translucent, able to transmit light, but not form.

traverse rod, a rod that uses carriers, pulleys, and cords to draw draperies open and closed.

tread, the individual run, or horizontal distance from the face of one riser to the next, in a flight of stairs

trevira, a polyester in which resistance to matting and crushing has been enhanced by autoclaving or heat setting the fibers.

tuft bind, a measure of the effort required to remove a carpet tuft from its primary backing.

tufting, a method of carpet construction which utilizes hundreds of needles to push pile yarns through a previously constructed primary backing sheet, forming loops or tufts of yarn which may be left uncut, cut, or selectively sheared to form a variety of surface textures, or by which high-low loops and sculptured effects can be created.

twisting, the winding of two or more strands of fiber or yarn together to make a single multiple-ply yarn.

UBC, (Uniform Building Code), a set of specifications prepared by the International Conference of Building Officials regulating materials and methods used in construction and establishing consistent standards to assure healthy, safe and sanitary conditions.

universal design, appropriate to people of all ages, abilities, and sizes.

upholstery, a soft covering of fabric on seating units, sometimes but not necessarily over padding, stuffing and/or springs.

urethane, lightweight, cellular plastic capable of assuming nearly any density and thus any hardness from resilient to rigid. Urethane can be sprayed as surface coating, preformed as cushioning and insulation, or cast to form rigid components.

utility core, a central space or unit, sometimes prefabricated, that contains all service elements, including bathrooms, heating, air conditioning, and the like.

vacuum-formed, a plastic formed in a mold in which all of the air is drawn out to form a vacuum that forces the plastic around the mold.

valance, a decorative fabric heading at the top of a window.

value, the attribute of perceived color by which it seems to transmit or reflect a greater or lesser fraction of the light incident upon it.

vaulted ceiling, a ceiling constructed as an extended arch, often semicylindrical in form (a barrel vault). Intersecting arches produce a groin vault; a ribbed vault reveals the framework of arched ribs.

vehicle, the carrying liquid of a suspension such as paint.

veiling reflection, partially or totally obscures the details to be seen by reducing the contrast.

velvet, a fabric covered with a close, short, fine, dense nap or pile.

venal structure, of or similar to the branching vessels which carry nutrients through living things.

vinyl, a versatile family of strong, lightweight plastics available in flexible, rigid, molded, film, foam, and cellular forms.

viscose, a fiber manufactured from chemically treated cellulose.

visual comfort probability, (VCP), the rating of a lighting system expressed as a percentage of people who, when viewing from a specified location and in a specified direction, will be expected to find it acceptable in terms of discomfort glare.

visual field, the sum of objects or points in space which can be perceived when the head and eyes are kept fixed.

visual surround, all portions of the visual field except the visual task.

visual task, those details and objects which must be seen for the performance of a given activity, including the immediate background of details or objects.

visual weight, the effect of visual impact regardless of actual weight, determined in part by color, texture and pattern.

vitriify, to convert into glass by fusion; typically by heat.

VOC, (Volatile Organic Compounds), a gaseous, sometimes harmful by-product of the curing process of some paints or adhesives.

wafer board, a course-grained, rough-faced industrial board product, composed of wood flakes and adhesive; easily cut, but not intended for finish work.

warp, the lengthwise yarns of a fabric, running through the loom, parallel to the edges of the run of fabric. The twist of an element away from its intended position caused by internal stresses due to changes in temperature or moisture.

weaving, the process of interlacing two or more sets of yarns, usually at right angles to each other, to make textiles.

weft, woven fabric. Also woof, the threads on a woven fabric which cross the warp.

Wilton, a specific weave of carpet in which yarns of different colors are raised in loops to form a pattern, after which the loops are cut to form a diverse plus pile.

woof, the threads on a woven fabric which cross the warp.

working drawings, the final drawings that are used to obtain bids for and construct a design.

workplane, the plane at which work is done and on which illuminance is specified and measured. Unless otherwise indicated, this is assumed to be a horizontal plane 0.76 m (30 in.) above the floor.